



Reaching out for help can feel hard, but it's a courageous step. If you're feeling stuck, overwhelmed, or not yourself, you're not alone. Wise next steps are available, and this guide can help you find yours.

## Do I Need Counseling?

There's never a wrong time to seek counseling, but it's normal to wonder if it's necessary, especially when facing pain feels overwhelming and your time feels stretched. Ask yourself:

- Have I been stuck in worry or rumination for weeks?
- Am I experiencing changes in sleep, appetite, or weight?
- Is it hard to concentrate or function normally?
- Do I feel ongoing hopelessness or despair?
- Have I increased alcohol or substance use to cope?
- Am I more irritable, angry, or emotionally reactive?
- Do changes in my spouse or child deeply concern me?

If you answered **yes** to any of these, speaking with a Christian counselor may be wise. Counseling provides professional care for emotional, relational, and behavioral challenges.

Source: [\*Focus on the Family\*](#)

## Other Support Options at Eagle Brook

One of these may be a helpful next step, depending on nature and severity of what you're facing.

### One-on-One Care (Not Counseling or Therapy)

This ministry pairs you with a trained volunteer of the same gender for weekly support (up to six months). They listen, pray, and walk alongside you. They don't fix or rescue, just care faithfully.

This may be helpful for:

- Grief after a loss
- Divorce or separation
- Job loss or work stress
- Chronic illness (yours or a loved one's)
- Loneliness, discouragement, or spiritual struggles
- Major life transitions (retirement, empty nest, relocation)

### Meeting with a Pastor

If you're wrestling with a significant spiritual crisis, moral dilemma, or life decision, meeting with a pastor may help you gain biblical wisdom and clarity on next steps. These meetings are typically one time and focused on guidance and prayer.

## Recognizing Where You Are

### Basic/Mild Struggles

Common challenges that many families face:

- Communication struggles
- Financial tension
- Parenting difficulties
- Conflict resolution challenges
- Feeling disconnected from your spouse

### Next Step

Intentional support often helps, such as:

- Prayer after weekend service
- Time alone with God for clarity
- Wise, trusted friends/small group
- One-on-One Care
- Resource suggestions from a pastor

Counseling is a healthy option at any stage. It's a neutral, safe space to strengthen skills.

### Growing/Persistent Struggles

Problems aren't basic, but not out of control:

- Ongoing communication breakdown
- Feeling emotionally distant in marriage
- Teen rebellion escalating
- Constant frustration over family issues
- Marriage or family losing priority

### Next Step

Early intervention can prevent deeper pain:

- Consider a marriage conference
- Begin Christian counseling for guidance and strategies
- Meet with a pastor

### Serious Struggles

You feel stuck, desperate, or at a breaking point:

- Communication consistently ends in anger or hurt feelings
- Intimacy has nearly disappeared
- Separation or divorce is being considered
- Child in full, all-out rebellion
- Teen involved in risky behavior
- Significant loss you cannot move forward from (death in family, job loss, etc.)

### Next Step

Before things get worse, contacting a professional Christian counselor is strongly recommended. Waiting will likely allow patterns to deepen.

### Crisis

Immediate help is needed:

- Separation or talked to attorney about divorce (consider DivorceCare)
- Active or recent affair
- Addiction (drugs, alcohol, pornography)
- Teen expressing suicidal thoughts
- Loss of control in the home

### Next Step

Seek professional counseling right away and consider speaking with a pastor for guidance and alternatives. It can help reshape your situation and perspective. Even here, there is hope. God is in the business of changing lives. He sees you, loves you, and invites you to take the next step toward healing.

Taking a wise next step can feel hard, but it often becomes the turning point. You are not alone, even if you physically or emotionally feel alone. God **is** near, and help is available.